

**MINUTES OF POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSION
MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2022**

4:00 p.m.

Council Chambers (203 South Farwell Street)

MEMBERS PRESENT: Daniel Kincaid, Disa Wahlstrand, Kimberly Cronk, Selika Ducksworth-Lawton

MEMBERS ABSENT: Stephanie Finn

STAFF PRESENT: Police Chief Matt Rokus
Fire Chief Chris Bell
Deputy Police Chief Chad Hoyord
Deputy Police Chief Derek Thomas
Police Lieutenant Ben Frederick
Deputy Fire Chief Matt Jagger
Human Resources Director Colleen Schian

OTHERS PRESENT: Deputy City Attorney Doug Hoffer
Firefighter Scott Green
Firefighter Kalab Evans
Firefighter Clint Lightell
Firefighter Daniel Lympus
Firefighter Jordan Ortmann
Firefighter Riley Strohm

The Commission convened in open session at 4:06 p.m. Meeting was called to order by President Kincaid. President Kincaid asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the Police and Fire Commission meeting held on July 21, 2022. No corrections or additions were noted, and the minutes stand approved as circulated.

Discussion was held with regard to which candidates to place on the Police Officer eligibility list based on interviews. Based on the discussion held and interviews prior to the meeting, a Police Officer eligibility list was created. Motion was made by Commissioner Wahlstrand, seconded by Commissioner Ducksworth-Lawton, and passed unanimously, to adopt the new eligibility list, which shall replace the previous list and remain in effect until replaced by the Commission.

Deputy Police Chief Chad Hoyord, Deputy Police Chief Derek Thomas, and Police Lieutenant Benjamin Frederick left the meeting at 4:12 p.m.

Chief Rokus provided a personnel update. There has been one new hire and one separation due to job-related permanent disability since the previous meeting. There is one candidate still under consideration from the previous eligibility list, it has been discussed prior to the meeting

that he has completed enough of the hiring process that he does not need to be carried on to the current eligibility list. There are currently three vacancies in the Police Department right now. However, there are three anticipated retirements before the end of the year.

Chief Rokus also provided an operational update. An officer-involved critical incident was discussed. Four officers responded to a call involving an intoxicated suspect with a loaded gun, which resulted in the suspect aiming the gun at the officers. Two of the officers fired their weapons in response. The Wisconsin Department of Justice is conducting a criminal investigation into the suspect's actions. In addition, an internal review of the officers who shot is being conducted by the department. The other two officers present are being considered witnessing officers. The suspect is in stable condition. Following the investigations, the reports will be made public. A discussion was held on the legality of the officer's actions. Deputy City Attorney, Doug Hoffer, discussed the legal standards of using deadly force, and indicated that the Police Department's training standards meet these legal standards. Further discussion on this matter was held, including how to address the public when questions about the incident arise and how to handle social media regarding incidents in the community.

Chief Bell provided a personnel update. The department has seen two separations since the last PFC meeting, both left on good terms. There are currently no vacancies in the Fire Department, as there have been six new hires since the last meeting. All six of the new recruits were present at the meeting and introduced to the commission members. Chief Bell recommended. A discussion was held regarding the upcoming promotions of Steven Patten to Lieutenant, and Steven Merkel and Peter Spencer to Fire Engineer based on the promotional eligibility list already adopted by the Police and Fire Commission. It was noted that approval is not needed for these promotions, but is still needed for Captain promotional recommendations.

Chief Bell also provided an operational update. The upgrade of Station 6 is moving forward and on budget, but still taking longer than expected due to material acquisition. The station is expected to be up and running by the first of the year. They are still waiting on news if the department has received the SAFER Grant and referendum this fall to determine if the department will be able to recruit more personnel.

Firefighters Scott Green, Kalab Evans, Clint Lightell, Daniel Lympus, Jordan Ortmann, and Riley Strohm left the meeting at 4:45 p.m.

A discussion was held regarding the possibility of holding a public comment period during future PFC meetings. Deputy City Attorney, Doug Hoffer, discussed the benefits and limitations of having a public comment period. It was noted that since it is an independent citizen commission, it is more of an oversight role and not a policy making role, which would change the type of comments that are able to be brought forward. It was also discussed that the commission is tasked with making unbiased decisions, and that a public comment period may taint that process if done incorrectly. In order to make sure that it is a productive session, guidelines would have to be set. It was noted that the Deputy City Attorney would do more

research on the topic, including if similar commissions in Wisconsin have a public comment period, and bring it forward at the next meeting.

President Kincaid asked if there are any future agenda items and none were noted.

At 5:10 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Ducksworth-Lawton, seconded by Commissioner Wahlstrand, and passed by unanimous roll call vote to go into closed session to conduct the informal performance review of the Fire Chief, Chief Bell, as well as discuss possible changes to the current Firefighter interview questions.

At 6:14 p.m., motion was made by Commissioner Ducksworth-Lawton, seconded by Commissioner Cronk and passed unanimously to move into open session.

A brief discussion was held in regards to the current number of new Firefighter applicants.

Motion was made by Commissioner Cronk to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Ducksworth-Lawton and the meeting was adjourned at 6:17 p.m.

The next regularly-scheduled Police and Fire Commission meeting is November 17th, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Kelsey Dittloff, Police and Fire Commission Secretary.